Unaffordable Health Expenditure

77 SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that rising cost of health care is causing huge debts to 4 per cent of low income group families in the country;

(b) whether these families do not have access to safe drinking water, proper sanitation, nutrition and pollution free environments;

(c) whether it is a fact that because of high health care expenditure 16 per cent of the families are pushed below poverty line;

(d) whether Government are taking remedial measures to contain the rising cost of health care to provide relief to lower income group families;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) Rising cost of healthcare is having an adverse impact on low income group families and invariably those below poverty line families do not have equitable access to safe drinking water, proper sanitation and nutrition, the determinants of public health.

(c) to (f) High levels of health expenditure is one of the factors pushing low income families below poverty line though no specific data on this is available. The Government under the National Rural Health Mission launched in April, 2005 aims to provide effective and equitable healthcare to the rural population throughout the country with special focus on 18 States with poor health indicators and weak health infrastructure. The Mission seeks to provide universal access to equitable, affordable and quality healthcare which is accountable and at the same time responsive to the needs of the people including the poor and vulnerable sections of the population. The other goals under the Mission include population stabilization, gender and demographic balance with decentralized planning at the core. The gaps in the existing rural healthcare scenario are being addressed through the involvement of the community, the Panchayati Institutions and other non-governmental organizations. An Accredited Social Health Activist will act as a link between the community and the health care system. The National Rural Health Mission also adopts an inter-sectoral approach with emphasis on determinants of health like sanitation and hygiene, drinking water and nutrition.

Disease control measures

78. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any effective measures to prevent Cancer/TB/ Hepatitis-B/AIDS, etc. in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the details of budgetary allocation made for the above purpose in the country; and

(c) the details of cases that have been detected in the country, State-wise and Hospital-wise during the last three years?